



**Canadian  
Heritage**

**Patrimoine  
canadien**

**FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF THE  
INFORMATION AND RESEARCH ON CANADA  
PROGRAM**

**Final Report**

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**Canada**<sup>131</sup>



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## SUMMARY

The Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) established the Information and Research on Canada Program (IRCP) in August 2001. Two years later, PCH undertook a formative evaluation of the program. This document is the final report on that evaluation.

## Methodology

The evaluation focused on program implementation and the probability of PCH achieving the desired results. The research methods used in the evaluation included a review of administrative and research documents, a total of 20 interviews with officials of the IRCP, the Canadian Unity Council (CUC) or the Centre for Research and Information on Canada (CRIC), and a survey of 111 people who recently took part in CRIC activities. The evaluation did not look at the CUC or the CRIC, but the IRCP.

## Description

The IRCP was established in 2001 to provide financial support for the activities of the CRIC, which basically handles research and communications for the CUC. The CUC is an independent organization based in Montreal and encourages a better understanding of Canada, Canadian life, the federation, Canadian institutions in general and Canada's diversity. To meet its goals, the CUC relies primarily on the financial support of the federal government. The CRIC, for example, has an annual budget of \$4.2 million, of which \$4.15 million (98%) comes from the contribution agreement with the IRCP.

The CRIC covers all of the CUC's communication and public participation activities, organizes events and conferences, and handles all of the CUC's media relations and communications as well as development of the CUC's Internet sites. It operates out of the CUC's head office in Montreal and through a number of regional offices (Quebec City, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver). In addition, a CRIC office in Ottawa handles all research, including studies, publications, polls and academic conferences.

## Findings

### *IRCP design*

The IRCP is a single-recipient program that financially supports the activities of the CRIC. The CRIC is free to choose its activities, research themes, conferences, etc., although it has to account for its expenditures to the senior IRCP officer by submitting financial and activity reports. The recipient is also required to allocate the funds it receives to the budget items identified in the contribution agreement.



According to the people interviewed, there are no program elements that stand in the way of success. However, some respondents made reference to the political overtone of CRIC and CUC activities. Some of the themes addressed by the CRIC can offend observers who have a different perception of the benefits of the Canadian federation. Consequently, the general view is that the strengths (and weaknesses) of the CRIC (and therefore the IRCP) vary depending on which side the observer lies.

### ***Implementation of the IRCP***

According to the key officials, the IRCP is being implemented as planned. Further, the CRIC's activities are in line with the objectives of the IRCP. There are, however, a number of shortcomings that need to be clarified.

CRIC activities take a number of different forms. Communication and publication within the CRIC account for more than \$1.5 million, or the bulk of the CRIC's budget with maintenance of the regional offices (\$1.7 million). Despite being of high quality and having the greatest appeal for the IRCP according to the PCH officials interviewed, the CRIC's survey and research activities account for only a small portion of the centre's budget (\$564,000 out of more than \$4 million in 2003-2004).

From a management standpoint, some respondents mentioned the CRIC's past difficulty providing a detailed account of its expenditures to the IRCP. That situation has improved since 2003. The general issue of transparency in the use of funds by the CUC should nevertheless be reviewed in a summative evaluation.

Some respondents also described the objectives of the CRIC as vague and difficult to measure. For example, the CRIC has "developed its research capability," but the real impact of that initiative on Canadians in general remains hard to measure. Further, there is no indication apart from the recent series of articles in *The Globe and Mail* in the summer of 2003 entitled "The New Canada" to show that the CRIC's research is reaching all Canadians. In reality, the results of our meetings suggest the opposite, that is, that the research is limited to a small, elite minority within the general population. Given that PCH's objectives are aimed at all Canadians, greater access to and wider distribution of the CRIC's reports would be desirable in order to meet the Department's goals.

While some CRIC reports have generated specific interest within the Department over the past two years, the people interviewed generally agreed that the CRIC's activities and services have limited impact within PCH. Giving the IRCP a bigger role in choosing the themes addressed by the CRIC would be one way to increase interest in and the real impact of the CRIC's activities and services within the Department.

### ***Ability of the program to meet its objectives***



There is no indication that the objectives and desired results cannot be met. The CRIC can today claim to ensure “ongoing and increased production of information tools while increasing the range of its products and developing its research capability.” However, the CRIC’s regional offices have only two or three employees on average, which immediately limits their real presence and greater effectiveness nationwide. Moreover, analysis of expenditures related to CRIC activities shows that the CRIC will not be able to create self-funded projects in the near future.

The following operational constraints should be considered in order to increase the ability of the IRCP to meet its objectives. The IRCP is entirely dependent on the CRIC and is not usually involved in choosing its activities. Even though the CRIC’s activities reach a small political and social elite, there is no way to measure the real impact of those activities nationally and on all Canadians. Moreover, that elite generally holds specific positions in support of existing Canadian institutions, but there is no indication that those activities have any influence on the undecided or even opponents of the Canadian federation. Some of the people interviewed also said that they would like to see more emphasis on the “research” side of the CRIC and less emphasis on the “communication” side.

### ***Evaluation of performance and accounting***

The CRIC’s accounting process consists in reporting to the IRCP the type of activity, the costs generated by the activity, the number of participants and the results (which often take the form of a publication). Those publications are available on the CRIC’s Internet site and are distributed to a few people in the Department. Most of the respondents said that they were unable to gauge the real impact of the publications on PCH decisions and activities.

The federal government’s financial contribution is not acknowledged other than in *The CRIC Papers* (the acknowledgment appears on the back of each document). Half of the respondents to our survey were unable to identify the federal government as contributing to CRIC activities or disagreed with that statement.

The IRCP does not have a defined strategy for measuring the performance of CRIC activities. There is a results-based management and accountability framework (RMAF) for the IRCP. However, consultations with certain stakeholders indicated that the RMAF has not been systematically implemented, lacks clarity and should be reviewed in the near future. CRIC’s reporting to the IRCP is minimal considering the amount involved.

Today, the CRIC regularly reports results to the IRCP in person or by telephone. Most of the respondents believe that the information provided to the Department now makes it possible to adequately monitor the CRIC. However, some respondents said that because of the broad descriptions used by the CRIC/CUC to explain some of the expenses incurred, the information provided does not permit full monitoring of the CUC/CRIC. This in-person or telephone



accounting process does not appear to be routine practice at PCH and is not very effective in enabling the IRCP to properly evaluate the CRIC's performance.

More generally, the consultations show that the CRIC should better document the impact of its activities. This would require a systematic approach in order to document the level of participation in CRIC activities, use of CRIC publications, and interaction between the CRIC and users (letters, calls, e-mails, etc.). In that connection, the Internet is an excellent tool that can be used to obtain feedback from users of CRIC products. Direct links with Canadian studies programs offered across the country could also increase the impact of the program and make it easier to measure that impact.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

To reiterate, the purpose of this formative evaluation was not to evaluate the CUC or the CRIC. We are therefore unable to assess the reasons why PCH chose to use the CUC and the CRIC to meet its strategic objectives.

The IRCP was implemented in 2001 to provide financial support for the activities of the CRIC. To that end, the CRIC's activities are divided into information, publication and communication, increased public participation through regional offices and other means, and research and polling. The senior IRCP officer therefore does not set up any specific activities, but primarily ensures sound management of the contribution agreement.

Based on our consultations, we find that the program is being implemented as planned. The CRIC's activities are in line with the objectives and take a variety of forms. However, the objectives are still vague and give the CRIC a great deal of leeway in justifying its activities. Moreover, the choice of themes addressed by those activities is still primarily controlled by the CRIC and the CUC. The IRCP is the main source of funding, yet has little influence over the design, selection, implementation or management of the resources allocated to those activities.

We believe that PCH's investment of more than \$12 million over almost three years should result in more impact within the Department. However, few CRIC reports seem to have any real influence on PCH policy. Further, a closer yet informal partnership between the IRCP and the CRIC in choosing the themes the CRIC addresses could increase the impact the CRIC has within PCH.

**Recommendation 1. The objectives and expected results set out in the contribution agreement should be carefully reviewed. More specific objectives will**



**enable the IRCP to identify CRIC activities more clearly and ensure a better accounting and evaluation strategy.**

The IRCP does not have a clearly defined strategy for measuring the performance of the CRIC. Accounting to the IRCP is currently minimal. Apart from periodic financial and activity reports from the CRIC, the IRCP is unable to gauge the real impact on Canadians of CRIC activities. Aside from a few comments gathered at the end of activities, there is nothing to otherwise indicate that the CRIC does its own evaluations of activities so that it can measure their impact on the general public. In that regard, some of the important performance indicators referred to in the RMAF are not being compiled.

**Recommendation 2. It is essential that it continue to submit periodic financial and activity reports to the IRCP, but the CRIC should be more systematic in documenting the impact of its activities in order to communicate its results to the IRCP in a timely manner. This more systematic collection of performance information will also enable the IRCP to ensure better accounting.**

The contribution agreement between PCH and the CUC regarding funding for CRIC activities clearly states the need to acknowledge the federal government's contribution. However, our consultations confirmed that this is very rarely done. The CUC is determined to be independent, but we do not believe it is appropriate to acknowledge all of the sponsors of CRIC activities except the federal government. A simple reference to the federal support as prescribed in the agreement between PCH and the CUC would be appropriate.

**Recommendation 3. As stated in the agreement, the CRIC should acknowledge the federal government as one of its sponsors, the same as the other sponsors it identifies in connection with its activities.**

This approach should not undermine the CRIC's independence, which most of the respondents described as essential to its effectiveness. This same challenge is apparently encountered by other single-recipient programs.

### **Management Response to the Formative Evaluation**

The department will continue to emphasize the effective dissemination of information about Canada and the nourishing of public policy discussion as a means of achieving IRCP objectives. Commissioned research by the CRIC is one source among many of the information that CRIC diffuses. The department regards the collaboration between CRIC and the Globe and Mail newspaper in the production of The New Canada as a welcome contribution to public understanding.



### **Management response to Recommendation #1**

The department is in complete agreement with this recommendation and will implement it in as timely a fashion as possible. We shall, however, provide more specific guidance to CUC through a covering letter on the next contribution agreement about the objectives and results, pending renewal of the program.

#### **Action Plan**

- Discussion with CUC to identify issues by 31/01/2004
- Clarifications incorporated in 04/05 agreement by 01/04/2004

### **Management response to Recommendation #2**

The department agrees completely with this recommendation and will take immediate measures to respond.

#### **Action Plan**

- Initial discussion with CUC to identify data gaps by 31/12/2003
- Follow-up meeting to identify measures and timing by 31/01/2004
- Tracking requirements specified in 04/05 agreement by 01/04/2004
- Monitoring ongoing

### **Management response to Recommendation #3**

The department recognizes, as did the evaluators, that considerable progress has been made in the past months with respect to ensuring appropriate recognition of our support for CRIC. Nevertheless, we believe that CRIC could and should do better, as recommended here. We will continue to work with the organization to clarify expectations around recognition and to ensure compliance.

#### **Action Plan**

- Discussion of specific expectations by product/activity by 31/12/2003
- Drafting of product/activity protocols by 31/01/2004
- Implementation of protocols from 01/03/2004
- Monitoring ongoing

## **1.0 Introduction**





Canadian Heritage is responsible for national policies and programs to promote Canadian heritage, culture and sports, the arts and linguistic duality to make Canada more cohesive and creative. PCH has four strategic objectives:

- ▶ to promote Canadian content;
- ▶ to foster participation and engagement in the culture sector;
- ▶ to foster connections among Canadians; and
- ▶ to promote active citizenship and civic participation.

Among other things, Canadian Heritage makes it possible to foster and strengthen connections among Canadians while deepening understanding across diverse communities.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, Canadian Heritage seeks to promote understanding of the rights and responsibilities of shared citizenship, while fostering opportunities to participate in Canada's civic life.<sup>2</sup>

To this end, PCH established the Information and Research on Canada Program (IRCP) in August 2001. Two years later, PCH undertook a formative evaluation of this program. The evaluation concentrates specifically on the effectiveness of the initiative, on the likelihood of this initiative meeting its expected results, and on the evaluation of performance and reporting. This is the final report of this evaluation. It includes five main sections.

- ▶ Section 2 presents the methodology used to structure the evaluation.
- ▶ Section 3 describes the IRCP as a whole, its objectives and the means used to attain these objectives.
- ▶ Section 4 identifies the main findings emerging from consultations, presents survey results and the review of the documentation used for this evaluation.
- ▶ Section 5 presents the main conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation in light of the evaluation findings.
- ▶ Finally, an appendix presents all the tools used for the consultations.

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<sup>1</sup>See the Department of Canadian Heritage site at [www.pch.gc.ca/index\\_e/cfm](http://www.pch.gc.ca/index_e/cfm).

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*



## 2.0 Methodology

### 2.1 Evaluation Questions

The evaluation of the IRCP covers three fiscal years, namely 2001-2002, 2002-2003 and 2003-2004. The evaluation revolves around a series of evaluation questions (see Table 1) primarily to identify the factors that have had a positive or negative impact on the ability of the IRCP to meet its objectives. These questions were developed by the PCH evaluation team in collaboration with representatives of the IRCP.

<b>Table 1: Evaluation Questions</b>
<b>Program Design and Implementation</b>
What are the strengths of the program's design (i.e., program objectives, expected results, structure, channels of communication and funding mechanisms)?
Are there any aspects of the program that hinder its success? If yes, what are they?
Is the program being implemented as intended? If not, why not?
Have any elements hindered the implementation of the program? If yes, what were these elements and what measures were taken to remedy the situation?
Are program activities in line with the contribution agreement?
Are program activities and outputs in line with program objectives? Are there any activities that are not necessary?
Does the program have the means necessary to ensure an appropriate reporting and accountability process regarding the activities and expenses incurred? Are program management practices appropriate and of sufficiently high quality?
Is the partnership approach effective? Is the delivery of the program through a third party effective?
Is the Department satisfied with the program activities and services? If not, what are the challenges to be met?
<b>Likelihood of the Program Meeting its Objectives</b>
Will the objectives and expected results be met? What evidence is there to support such an answer?
In what way do current operations/activities enable the program to meet its objectives?
Are there constraints that hinder the program from meeting its objectives? If yes, what are they?
Is there any indication that the program might lead to unintended effects, either positive or negative? If so, what are these effects?
<b>Performance Measurement and Reporting</b>
Does the program have an adequate and appropriate performance measurement strategy?
Is the Department's contribution agreement appropriate to measure performance and reporting?
Does the recipient organization report on program outputs? If not, what measures should be taken to correct this situation?
Does the information provided to the Department ensure sufficient monitoring of the program?



## 2.2 Research Methods

The research methods used to address these evaluation questions are described in Table 2.

Table 2: Research Methods	
Methods	Data Sources
Document Review	The document review includes a series of administrative documents and the contribution agreement with the Canadian Unity Council (CUC). The CUC also provided administrative data including the business plans 2001-2003 and 2003-2005 (draft) as well as PCH activity report updates. This part also includes a review of the types of reports prepared by the CUC ( <i>CUC Magazine</i> , <i>The CRIC Papers</i> and <i>Portraits of Canada</i> ).
Interviews	In all, 20 stakeholders were interviewed. The list of stakeholders includes PCH and CUC/CRIC representatives.
Survey	A survey was conducted of 111 persons who had taken part in the Centre for Research and Information on Canada (CRIC) activities; 48 responses were received for a return rate of 43%. The sample of 111 was provided by CUC/CRIC officers in charge.



### 3.0 Description of the Initiative

This evaluation concentrates specifically on the design and implementation of the IRCP and on the likelihood of its meeting its objectives. In other words, this is neither an evaluation of the CUC nor of CRIC, but rather the IRCP. We will begin with a description of the IRCP to provide the context of this evaluation. Section 3.2 describes the CUC in greater detail and section 3.3 pertains to CRIC, its activities and publications.

#### 3.1 The Information and Research on Canada Program (IRCP)

The Department of Canadian Heritage established the IRCP in August 2001. In October 2001, PCH signed a contribution agreement with the CUC to provide \$4 million in funding annually to CRIC. Previously, CRIC was subsidized by a multitude of federal government programs. Further to a decision by the Minister of Canadian Heritage, the terms and conditions accepted in 2001 were extended by one additional year, until March 2004.

The aim of the IRCP is to provide Canadians with relevant information and research on Canada's cultural diversity, its linguistic duality and the values shared by all Canadians. This objective supports the Department's general aim to further promote Canadian citizenship and to encourage Canadians to communicate with each other in a significant way.<sup>3</sup> To this end, the IRCP concentrates on three areas:

- ▶ Canada's place in the world;
- ▶ the Canadian federation, its roles and the functioning of its institutions; and
- ▶ the impact on Canadians of certain world-wide issues such as globalization, the distribution of tax resources in Canada, Canada's international role, Canadian identity, etc.<sup>4</sup>

The IRCP was established in 2001 to provide financial support for CRIC activities. The latter is responsible for information and research for the CUC. To this end, the IRCP is a single-recipient program.

#### 3.2 The Canadian Unity Council (CUC)

The CUC was established in 1964. The CUC is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit organization whose aim is to promote a better understanding of Canada and its identity, its federation and institutions in general as well as its regional, social and cultural diversity. In other words, the CUC emphasizes national unity, promotes Canadian values, encourages a national

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<sup>3</sup> Information and Research on Canada Program, Terms and Conditions, August 2001.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



dialogue on matters of interest to Canadians and stresses the strengths and uniqueness of the Canadian federation around the world.<sup>5</sup>

The CUC is a private organization that receives funding from three sources. A very large majority of the organization's funding comes from a number of federal departments. The CUC also solicits contributions from the private sector through its own Internet site, its Board of Directors and its Board of Governors. Lastly, the administration of its youth and exchange programs provides some additional revenue.

The CUC operates six programs.

- ▶ The Centre for Research and Information on Canada (CRIC)
- ▶ Three youth programs:
  - Encounters with Canada
  - Summer Work - Student Exchange
  - Experience Canada
- ▶ Canadians in Europe
- ▶ Canada Residence Exchange

Among these programs, CRIC was established in 1996 and manages the CUC's research and communications activities. CRIC is described in greater detail in the following section.

According to its mandate to promote connections among Canadians, the CUC also operates a number of youth programs. The *Encounters with Canada* program provides the opportunity to some 130 students aged 15 to 17 from across Canada to stay in Ottawa each week during the school year to gain a better understanding of Canada's diversity and its benefits. The *Summer Work - Student Exchange* program allows Anglophone and Francophone teens to experience Canadian realities by staying with the families of their exchange partners from across the country. They learn about different aspects of the culture while improving their second-language skills. The *Experience Canada* program seeks to foster ties among young Canadians and their foreign exchange partners while giving them the opportunity to learn more about Canada, its institutions and values during a three-week exchange.

Finally, the *Canada Residence Exchange* program provides for the exchange of residences in Canada, while *Canadians in Europe* is a multi-disciplinary association established in 1999 to bring together Europeans and Canadians to discuss various current events issues that are important to Canada. This program operates three chapters in Europe, one each in France, Great Britain and Belgium.

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<sup>5</sup> For more details, please see the CUC Internet site at [www.cucweb.ca](http://www.cucweb.ca).



The CUC headquarters is in Montreal. The CUC has total permanent staff of over 25 serving at its Montreal head office, its research office in Ottawa and its four other regional offices. While the Montreal headquarters alone has more than ten employees, including the Co-Director of CRIC in charge of communications, the Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary and Quebec City regional offices have between two and four employees each: an office manager, a support person and one or two additional assistants. The achievements of the regional offices are mentioned in CRIC activity reports to the IRCP and consist largely of organizing conferences and round tables and supporting certain CRIC research activities. Moreover, the CUC has a Board of Directors (27 positions) and a Board of Governors (more than 245 members) whose members serve on a voluntary basis and represent various segments of the Canadian elite.<sup>6</sup>

### 3.3 The Centre for Research and Information on Canada (CRIC)

Since 1996, CRIC has managed all CUC research and communications activities. For 2003-2004, CRIC has a budget of \$4.2 million, more than \$4 million of which comes from the contribution agreement with the IRCP. Table 3 shows the detailed budget for CRIC for 2003-2004.

<b>1. CRIC Communications (Montreal)</b>	<b>Budget (\$)</b>
Operating costs (human resources, offices, travel and accommodation)	1,226,072
Publications ( <i>Opinion Canada</i> , <i>The CRIC Papers</i> , <i>CUC Magazine</i> , Annual Report, translations, other)	215,500
Conferences and sponsorships	43,750
Internet	48,200
Public Relations	22,000

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<sup>6</sup>For more information, please see [http://www.cucweb.ca/en\\_html/admin.html](http://www.cucweb.ca/en_html/admin.html).



<b>Table 3: CRIC Budget for 2003-2004</b>	
<b>2. CRIC Research (Ottawa)</b>	
Operating costs (human resources, offices, travel and accommodation)	287,900
Research projects (polling, consultants, outside experts, translation, meetings, special events)	276,000
<b>3. Regional Offices (Quebec City, Toronto, Calgary, Vancouver and an office for the Atlantic Region that has yet to be identified )</b>	
Start-up costs (Atlantic Region office)	4,425
Operating costs (human resources, offices, travel and accommodation)	1,428,610
Round tables and special events	176,750
Special studies	150,000
<b>4. Summary</b>	
Total for CRIC Communications	1,555,522
Total for CRIC Research	563,900
Total for CRIC Regional Offices	1,759,785
Management costs	365,000
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>4,244,207</b>
<b>Outside sponsorships</b>	<b>79,375</b>
<b>PCH contribution</b>	<b>4,150,000</b>
Surplus (Deficit) (deficit will be covered by additional outside sponsorships)	(14,832)
Source : Centre for Research and Information on Canada, Plan of Activities 2003-2004, 4 July 2003, pp. 13-15.	

The main CRIC office is located in Montreal, within the confines of the CUC. CRIC is also responsible for the regional offices. One of these offices is in the Quebec City and organizes a series of activities and regional round tables across the province to meet CUC objectives. CRIC also has an office in Toronto which covers not only Ontario but also the entire Atlantic Region. The Calgary office covers Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. Finally, the Vancouver office covers British Columbia and Yukon, while the Ottawa office assumes CRIC's responsibilities relating to research and polling. A regional office for the Atlantic Region could be set up in 2003-2004.

To meet all of these objectives, CRIC focuses in particular on communications, research and the organization of specific activities through its regional offices. The communications and citizen participation sectors are very important in CRIC and they organize events and conferences while also performing all communications and media relations roles for the CUC. These sectors are responsible for all CRIC publications (*Opinion Canada*, *The CRIC Papers*, etc.), media relations, the management of CUC and CRIC Internet sites and the organization of conferences and events. For example, *Opinion Canada* and *The CRIC Papers* are, respectively, weekly and quarterly CRIC publications that deal with various subjects such as demographic growth in



Canada, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, etc. These sectors also develop the CUC Internet sites.

The CRIC office in Ottawa is responsible for all the organization's research. To this end, CRIC monitors and analyses public opinion on the Canadian federation and all issues dealing with Canadian interests in each region of Canada, and informs Canadians through an array of publications, studies, seminars, round tables (frequently in partnership with an association or university institution that shares similar interests), or its Internet site.<sup>7</sup> CRIC conferences and round tables are organized on a regular basis and include the general public as well as specialists from academia, politics or business. Most of these conferences and seminars are organized by CRIC regional offices and take the form of partnerships with associations and universities that share the same interests.<sup>8</sup>

The Ottawa office also manages several surveys among Canadians to explore their concerns and points of view about Canadian economic, social, political and cultural issues. CRIC accordingly publishes an array of research and bulletins, one of which is a weekly commentary on current events, called *Opinion Canada*. Moreover, the CRIC Internet site provides access to all CRIC research, studies and surveys while also providing information on all CUC programs.<sup>9</sup> For example, CRIC conducted five surveys and more than eight research projects or presentations at conferences between April and October 2002.

## 4.0 Evaluation Findings

This section summarizes the findings of the different research methods used in this evaluation. The information is structured on the basis of the evaluation questions shown in Table 1.

### 4.1 Program Design and Implementation

This section examines the factors that contributed to the design of the IRCP, including federal participation in CRIC. The implementation of initiatives and activities related to IRCP objectives will also be covered.

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<sup>7</sup>For more details, please see [http://www.cric.ca/en\\_html/index.html](http://www.cric.ca/en_html/index.html)

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*





#### 4.1.1 IRCP Design

This part will address the following questions.

- ▶ What are the strengths of the program's design (i.e., program objectives, expected results, structure, channels of communication and funding mechanisms)?
- ▶ Are there any aspects of the program that hinder its success? If yes, what are they?

Before 2001, CRIC was funded by the Canadian Identity Directorate and the Official Languages Directorate at PCH. The IRCP was established in 2001 and took over the financial support of CRIC activities. The stakeholders consulted explained that the IRCP was created to simplify the funding of CRIC activities within PCH. Moreover, the stakeholders described the IRCP as being a single-recipient program due to the difference between the specific role of CRIC, which seeks to reach all Canadians, as opposed to university Canadian Studies groups, which traditionally aim to reach a specialized and academic audience. Apart from the IRCP, PCH has five other programs that have a single recipient: Radio Canada International; the Fathers of Confederation Building; TV5; the Canadian Conference of the Arts; and the Canadian Museums Association.

From 2001 to January 2003, the IRCP was a program under the Canadian Identity Directorate at PCH. Following an internal reorganization, the IRCP was transferred in January 2003 to the Management, Regional and Correspondence Services Branch of the Public Affairs and Communications sector.

As stated in the Program terms and conditions, the purpose of the IRCP is to provide Canadians, in a timely manner, with the results of research and pertinent information required to promote a better knowledge and understanding of the wealth and range of the main components of Canadians' unique identity.<sup>10</sup> To this end, the objectives of the IRCP are identical to those of CRIC. The following Table provides a description.

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<sup>10</sup>Information and Research on Canada Program, Terms and Conditions, *op. cit.*, August 2001.



<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Description</b>
Short-term objectives	To reach new audiences through continuous and more abundant production of information tools.
	To diversify CRIC research projects and to develop its research capability.
Medium-term objectives	To ensure the visibility of CRIC and to develop an efficient network in all the regions of the country.
	To develop initiatives that would allow for the creation of self-sponsored programs.
Long-term objectives	To ensure that more Canadians connect with each other, share their stories and information, and gain better understanding of Canada's place in the world.
	To promote greater awareness among Canadians of issues relating to the principles and operation of the Canadian federation and its institutions, and to encourage a constructive dialogue among Canadians.
	To promote a sharper awareness among Canadians of emerging issues of concern to Canadians, such as globalization, the widening gap between the urban and rural worlds, the drop in voter turnout at elections and the impact of such issues on Canadian identity.

Source: Information and Research on Canada Program, Terms and Conditions, *op. cit.*, August 2001.

To attain such objectives, the IRCP contributed \$4 million to the CUC in 2001-2002, as well as a similar amount for 2002-2003, to fund CRIC activities. As shown in Table 3, the IRCP contribution to CRIC for 2003-2004 is \$4.15 million. This sum represents the very large majority (98%) of the funds available to CRIC. Some contributions from the private sector round out the CRIC budget. See Table 3 for more details.

A contribution agreement for the IRCP was signed between PCH and the CUC in October 2001 for a period of two years (2001-2002 and 2002-2003). The Minister of Canadian Heritage exercised her right to extend the terms and conditions for an additional year, until March 2004.

The IRCP has a senior officer at PCH to ensure that CRIC observes the contribution agreement. CRIC has freedom to choose its activities, research subjects, conferences, etc. but must give an accounting of its expenses to the senior officer of the IRCP by providing him with financial and activity reports. Moreover, the recipient must allocate the funds received to the budget items set out in the contribution agreement. PCH very rarely intervenes in the design, selection process or implementation of CRIC activities. However, since the spring of 2003, the spirit of sharing between the IRCP and CRIC has been on the rise.

According to those consulted, there is no part of the program that hinders its success. However, some stressed the political overtones of CRIC and CUC activities to promote the Canadian federation and its institutions. It seems evident that certain topics broached by CRIC can ruffle the feathers of some observers who have a different view of the advantages of the Canadian federation or of the role of its institutions. As a result, the persons consulted generally agree that



the strengths (and weaknesses) of CRIC (and, therefore, of the IRCP) depend on the views held by these observers. The strengths become weaknesses and vice versa.

#### 4.1.2 Implementation of the IRCP

This part will address the following questions.

- ▶ Is the program being implemented as intended? If not, why not?
- ▶ Have certain elements hindered the implementation of the program? If yes, what were these elements and what measures were taken to remedy the situation?
- ▶ Are program activities in line with the contribution agreement?
- ▶ Are the program activities and outputs in line with program objectives? Are there any activities that are not necessary?
- ▶ Is the partnership approach effective? Is the delivery of such a program through a third party effective?
- ▶ Is the Department satisfied with the program activities and services? If not, what are the challenges to be met?

According to the main stakeholders, the IRCP is implemented as planned. There are however certain shortcomings that must be explained.

CRIC activities take many forms. In the first place, communications and publications use up more than \$1.5 million, or the biggest part of CRIC budget, together with maintaining the regional offices (\$1.7 million). One must note that the communications and publications activities include not only CRIC activities but also all CUC activities. On the whole, although CRIC's survey and research activities are the most attractive to the IRCP according to those consulted at PCH, they account for a small part of CRIC's budget (\$564,000 of CRIC's 2003-2004 total budget of \$4.2 million). Moreover, CRIC's staff spends a very small part of its time on these activities. Surveys are not normally conducted by CRIC staff but rather are carried out under contract. Finally, the amount of \$564,000 includes the costs relating to research as such as well as salaries, space rental, surveys, travel, supplies and management costs. In other words, \$276,000 is specifically dedicated to research projects.

The survey results (see Table 2 for more information on survey methodology) as well as several stakeholders confirm the quality and importance of the research undertaken by CRIC and its Ottawa regional office. Table 5 shows the overall importance of CRIC activities to survey participants.



<b>Table 5: Overall importance of CRIC activities (n=48), Scale 1 to 5</b>							
CRIC Event or Activity	Evaluation (%)						Total
	Low			High		No response	
Scale	1	2	3	4	5		
Forums or Conferences	0	4.2	15	35	44	2	100
Research Material or Publications	2.1	0	13	38	38	10.4	100
Internet Site	4.2	4.2	15	23	29	25	100

Source : Survey for participants in CRIC activities

Table 6 shows survey results for the level of satisfaction with CRIC events or activities.

<b>Table 6: Degree of satisfaction with the last CRIC Session, interaction or activity (n=48), Scale 1 to 5</b>							
CRIC Event or Activity	Evaluation (%)						Total
	Low			High		No response	
Scale	1	2	3	4	5		
Forums or Conferences	0	2.1	4.2	29	52	12.4	100
Research Material or Publications	2.1	0	13	27	40	18.7	100
Internet Site	4.2	2.1	4.2	23	29	37.4	100

Source: Survey for participants in CRIC activities

And Table 7 shows the importance given by respondents to the survey on CRIC’s contribution to available research on Canada.

<b>Table 7: Importance of CRIC research material and publications (n=48), Scale 1 to 5</b>						
Not very important			Very important		Don't know	Total
1	2	3	4	5		
2.1 %	0 %	2.1 %	29.2 %	56.3 %	10.4 %	100 %

Source: Survey for participants in CRIC activities

The contribution agreement stipulates that, within the framework of CRIC activities and operations, the recipient (CUC) must achieve the short-, medium- and long-term objectives as described above. Therefore, CRIC activities are in line with the contribution agreement as well as with expected objectives and results. CRIC is expanding its audience through the continuous and increased production of information tools. Moreover, according to some stakeholders, the creation of an Internet site solely for CRIC also served this purpose. Setting up a CRIC regional office in Ottawa has also allowed CRIC to increase its research capability while developing, thanks to all its regional offices, an information network in all the country’s regions. However,



there is no indication that CRIC could now establish self-funded projects. The PCH contribution therefore remains essential.

Although the activities undertaken are justifiable and necessary, some respondents at PCH said they would like to see CRIC emphasize the research aspect more. As seen in Table 4, CRIC's short-term objectives involve the continued, increased and diversified production of information products and projects and developing its research capability. However, and as seen in Table 3, barely \$564,000 of CRIC's total budget of \$4.2 million is earmarked for research in 2003-2004.

Certain stakeholders mentioned that IRCP and CRIC objectives are vague and difficult to measure. In other words, several activities could be described as meeting these objectives. CRIC maintains that the number of hits on its Internet site is increasing. However, we have not been able to obtain the exact number of users of CRIC research or bulletins and we are not able to state that there is greater support by CRIC's audience among Canadians. CRIC has also developed its research capability by setting up a regional office in Ottawa and by hiring a co-director for research. However, the real impact of this move on Canadians in general remains difficult to measure. In the same way, it is still too soon to measure the results of medium- and long-term objectives. An overall evaluation of the IRCP in two or three years, however, should provide a better perspective on the results achieved.

Because of its limited staff and resources, the IRCP is not able to achieve all of its objectives alone. For this reason, the 'partnership approach' and the implementation of the program by CRIC appears to be effective. The question now is to establish whether CRIC is unique in Canada in order to justify the establishment of a program such as the IRCP to fund its activities.

Except for the recent "The New Canada" initiative, a series of articles published in the *Globe and Mail* in the summer of 2003, there is little indication that CRIC's research activities reach all Canadians. In fact, the results of our meetings show the opposite, that is, access to a specific and minority elite within the general population. Given PCH objectives that are aimed at the Canadian population as a whole, greater access and a broader distribution of CRIC reports would be desirable. For example, our survey shows that an increased partnership with academic institutions and research groups would be appreciated to further enhance CRIC's impact. Increased penetration into classrooms would be a means of remedying this situation and of influencing future generations of leaders within the federation.

Apart from the availability of its reports on its Internet site, CRIC activity reports and services are usually provided to a limited number of persons. Although CRIC activities may well reach a specific and influential elite within the general population, it is hard to measure whether these activities reach all Canadians, as prescribed in PCH strategic objectives.

Our consultations confirm that, at PCH, these recipients are usually the program manager and his superiors (the director, the directors general of management, regional and correspondence services, and the ADM of public affairs and communications). Although some CRIC reports



were of particular interest within the Department in the last two years, the stakeholders generally agree on the limited impact of CRIC services and activities within PCH. An increased partnership between the IRCP and CRIC in the choice of subjects addressed would be one means of increasing the interest and real impact of CRIC's activities and services within the Department and the federal government while at the same time reaching a greater number of Canadians.

From a management point of view, some people also mentioned CRIC's former difficulties in giving a detailed account of its expenditures to the IRCP. At one time, PCH had difficulty gaining access to CRIC's expense records and the answers to IRCP requests were vague. Our consultations show that the situation has improved since 2003. The more general question of transparency in the use of funds by the CUC should, however, be reviewed.

## **4.2 Likelihood of the Program Meeting its Objectives**

This section will answer the following evaluation questions.

- ▶ Will the objectives and expected results be met? What evidence is there to support such an answer?
- ▶ In what way do current operations/activities enable the program to meet its objectives?
- ▶ Are there constraints that hinder the program from reaching its objectives? If yes, what are they?
- ▶ Is there any indication that the program might lead to unintended effects, either positive or negative? If yes, what are these effects?

This evaluation is formative and is thus not intended to definitively establish the success of the IRCP. Since the IRCP was established barely two years ago, it would neither be realistic nor appropriate to draw final conclusions regarding this program. However, our methodology allows us to explore the likelihood of the program meeting its objectives and expected results.

For now, there is no indication that the objectives and expected results shown in Table 4 could not be met. This is particularly the case for the short-term objectives since CRIC is now able to claim an ongoing and increased production of information tools while increasing the range of its products and developing its research capability, although on a reduced scale with respect to all Canadians. This being said, several of the specified objectives are difficult to measure in a concrete manner using the data that is currently available. CRIC has several regional offices across the country that allow it to develop its information network. But one must remember that several of these regional offices only have two or three employees (usually a director and one or two assistants) thereby limiting their real presence and greater effectiveness nationwide. Moreover, an analysis of expenses relating to CRIC activities shows that CRIC will not be able to create self-funded projects in the near future.



The IRCP does not conduct any operation or activity to meet its objectives and basically relies on CRIC. To this end, CRIC pursues its objectives through various means, including a number of publications (*Opinion Canada*, *The CRIC Papers*, various surveys, etc.), special prizes (awards given by Quebec weeklies to journalists who distinguish themselves in certain reporting categories), polls (*Attitudes to Federalism* or *The New Canada* are recent examples), the use of its Internet site and the organization of conferences, round tables and colloquia to encourage citizen participation and to debate ideas regarding the Canadian federation or its institutions. These conferences and round tables deal with an array of subjects such as the *20th Anniversary of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (Ottawa, April 2002), *Borderlines: Canada in North America* (Calgary, September 2002 and Montreal, November 2002), etc.

Although considerable efforts are being made by CRIC authorities to keep up their Internet site, its impact on those who are interested is moderate. Table 8 shows that the CRIC Internet site plays a tiny role in informing people of the organization’s activities.

<b>Table 8: How were you informed of CRIC activities in which you participated in the last two years? (n=48)</b>	
<b>Means of Communication</b>	<b>%</b>
By friends/colleagues	44
In writing	40
By e-mail	35
By acquaintances at the CUC	11
By taking part in organizing the activity	4
<i>Through the CRIC Internet site</i>	2
Note: Respondents could provide more than one answer; the sum of the percentages could exceed 100%. Source: Survey for participants in CRIC activities	

Table 9 shows that, in answer to our survey question “Do you have suggestions to make to increase CRIC’s impact”, the most desirable improvement is better advertising through the CRIC Internet site.





<b>Table 9: Do you have suggestions to increase CRIC’s impact? (n=48)</b>	
<b>Suggestions</b>	<b>%</b>
Better advertising through its Web site; greater access to media	25
More activities	11
Increased partnership (schools, research groups, etc.)	8
No change; carry on as before	6
Other (research issues other than those on Quebec; open an additional regional office; etc.)	17
No response	44
<small>Note: Respondents could provide more than one response; the sum of the percentages could exceed 100%.            Source: Survey for participants in CRIC activities</small>	

To increase the IRCP’s ability to reach its objectives, the following operational constraints should be taken into consideration. The IRCP depends solely on CRIC and is usually not involved in the choice of its activities. Although CRIC activities reach a limited political and social elite, there is no way to measure the real impact of its activities nationally and on all Canadians. Moreover, this elite usually has specific positions in support of established Canadian institutions but there is nothing to indicate that these activities influence the undecided or even those opposed to the Canadian federation. Certain persons who were consulted also stressed their desire to see greater emphasis placed on CRIC’s research activities and less on communications. Others also mentioned the budget limitations which prevent the CUC/CRIC from opening an office in the Atlantic Region. Stakeholders at the CUC/CRIC stated however that there are plans to open a regional office in this region this year.

According to all the stakeholders, there is no indication that the IRCP produces unexpected effects, either positive or negative.

### **4.3 Performance Measurement and Reporting**

The following questions are answered in this part.

- ▶ Does the program have the means necessary to ensure a proper reporting and accountability process with regard to the activities and expenditures incurred? Are the management practices regarding this program appropriate and of sufficient quality?
- ▶ Does the program have an adequate and appropriate performance measurement strategy?
- ▶ Is the Department’s contribution agreement appropriate to measure performance and reporting?
- ▶ Does the recipient organization report on program outputs? If not, what measures should be taken to correct this situation?





- ▶ Does the information provided to the Department ensure sufficient monitoring of the program?

The CRIC reporting process consists of reporting to the IRCP on the type of activity, the associated costs, the number of participants and the results (which frequently take the form of a publication). These publications are available on the CRIC Internet site and are also provided in full to the department. The dissemination of these publications within PCH, however, is usually limited to a few individuals. Most stakeholders said they could not evaluate the real impact of these publications on PCH decisions and activities.

Although it contributes more than four million dollars annually to the CUC for CRIC operations, the IRCP takes no part in designing CRIC activities, in the selection process, implementation or the management of financial resources dedicated to these activities. Moreover, the IRCP does not conduct any evaluation of the impact or output of CRIC activities. In reality, the mandate as perceived by IRCP authorities is now more to ensure compliance with the contribution agreement and its associated budget and to receive CRIC financial and activity reports.

There is no acknowledgement of the federal government’s contribution to CRIC activities except in *The CRIC Papers* (where this acknowledgement appears on the back of documents). However, some stakeholders stated that, usually, all the sponsors of CRIC activities or colloquia were announced during the said activity, except for the federal government. In fact, half the respondents to our survey were not able to identify the federal government as being a contributor to CRIC activities or disagreed with such a statement. Table 10 shows these results.

Table 10: CRIC research publications are wholly, or in large part, funded by the federal government (n=48)					
Strongly agree		Strongly disagree		Don't know	Total
1	2	3	4		
19%	31%	13%	6%	31%	100%
Source: Survey for participants in CRIC activities					

The CUC/CRIC stakeholders consulted justified such a situation by stressing the importance of avoiding any potential connection between the CUC, which wishes to be independent, and the federal government. However, we believe that a simple mention of federal support, as required in the October 2001 agreement between the IRCP and the CUC would be justified. Given our mandate, we were not able to verify this aspect for the other PCH single-recipient programs.

The IRCP does not have a defined strategy for measuring the performance of CRIC activities. There is a results-based management and accountability framework (RMAF) for the IRCP. However, consultations with certain stakeholders indicated that the RMAF has not been



systematically implemented, lacks clarity and should be reviewed in the near future. CRIC's reporting to the IRCP is minimal considering the amount involved.

CRIC also submits the following reports to the IRCP.

- ▶ Two semi-annual reports that summarize all CRIC activities and expenditures with explanations on activities and the attainment of objectives as set by the IRCP. The second (and last) annual report also contains a forecast of activities for the next twelve months. For example, the financial reports that are due for the year 2003-2004 are, at a minimum, one for the period ending December 31, 2003 and another for the period ending March 31, 2004.
- ▶ The CUC/CRIC provides the IRCP with a business plan for the coming years. Such a report dealing with the next three years was completed in December 2002.
- ▶ Finally, a report detailing the financial activities/expenditures for every month that an advance is required.

Any delay in issuing one of these reports to the IRCP now results in a freeze in the transfer of funds from PCH to the CUC/CRIC.

Most stakeholders believe that the PCH contribution agreement is adequate to evaluate CRIC performance and reporting. Some CUC stakeholders stated that such a process of reporting to PCH allowed them to evaluate themselves at the same time. Finally, some stakeholders outside the CUC stated that such reports only involved information that would already have been collected by any good activity manager.

Today, CRIC regularly reports results to the IRCP in person or by telephone. Most respondents generally agree that the information provided to the Department now makes it possible to monitor CRIC adequately. However, some respondents said that, because of the broad descriptions used by CRIC/CUC to explain some of the expenditures incurred, the information provided does not allow for full monitoring of the CUC/CRIC. This reporting in person or by telephone does not appear to be routine practise at PCH and is not very efficient in enabling the IRCP to evaluate CRIC output in specific terms.

More generally, the consultations show that it would be to CRIC's advantage in order to better document the impact of its activities. This would require a systematic approach in order to document the level of participation in CRIC activities, the use of CRIC publications, interaction between CRIC and its users (letters, calls, e-mails, etc.). In this regard, the Internet is an excellent tool that could be used to obtain feedback from users of CRIC products. Moreover, direct links with Canadian Studies' programs that are offered across the country could increase the impact of the program and make it easier to measure.

## **5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations**



This section presents the main conclusions emerging from the evaluation. Moreover, where required, it includes recommendations. To reiterate, the purpose of this formative evaluation was not to evaluate the CUC or CRIC. We are, therefore, unable to assess the reasons leading PCH to use the CUC and CRIC to meet its strategic objectives.

The IRCP was established in 2001 to provide financial support for CRIC activities. To this end, CRIC activities are grouped under three broad headings: information, publication and communication; maintaining regional offices for increased public participation; and, finally, research and polling.

When it was established in 2001, the IRCP adopted the same objectives as those of CRIC. All the activities related to achieving these objectives emanate from CRIC. The IRCP only has one senior officer who ensures the proper management of the contribution agreement between PCH and the CUC to fund CRIC activities.

Although the IRCP is still new, implementation of the program is unfolding as planned. In this regard, CRIC activities are in line with IRCP objectives and take a variety of forms, from the organization of colloquia and conferences to research and surveys. It is important to stress, however, the vagueness of the objectives stated. Without questioning the intent and efforts of CRIC or even of the IRCP, we noted that the stated objectives can be met through a range of activities. As to the short-term objectives, a simple conference could serve to reach a new audience while diversifying CRIC research projects; this would not require such a large financial contribution from PCH.

Moreover, the choice of subjects dealt with at these activities remains largely under CUC and CRIC control. Although it is the primary contributor to CRIC, to all intents and purposes, the IRCP has no influence on the design of CRIC activities, the selection process, implementation or the management of financial resources for these activities.

Our consultations showed that few CRIC reports have a specific influence on PCH policies and directions. According to many stakeholders, the real impact of these reports is limited within the federal government and is also limited to an academic, political and social elite within the general population. Although increasing the influence and impact of these reports is not a specific objective of the program or of CRIC, we believe that an investment of more than \$12 million over a period of close to three years should be translated into a major and positive impact to help PCH reach its own strategic objectives. However, several stakeholders were not able to clearly identify such an impact within the Department. A summary evaluation, however, would provide for clearer measurement of this impact within the federal government as a whole and within the Canadian population in general.

Without taking away from the independence of the CUC and CRIC, a closer, if informal, partnership between the IRCP and CRIC in the choice of subjects dealt with by the latter could



increase CRIC's impact within PCH. Moreover, such a partnership could ensure better dissemination of CRIC reports within the federal government and even among the general population.

**Recommendation 1. The objectives and expected results set out in the contribution agreement should be reviewed and made more precise. More specific objectives will enable the IRCP to identify CRIC activities more clearly and provide for a better evaluation and reporting strategy.**

The IRCP does not have a clearly defined strategy for measuring CRIC's performance. Reporting to the IRCP is currently minimal. Apart from periodic financial and activity reports from CRIC, the IRCP is not able to gauge the real impact of CRIC activities on Canadians. Apart from a few comments gathered at the end of some activities, there is nothing to indicate that CRIC conducts its own activity evaluations to measure its impact on the general public. In this regard, some of the important performance measurement indicators referred to in the RMAF are not being compiled.

**Recommendation 2. Although CRIC's periodic financial and activity reports to the IRCP are essential, CRIC should be more systematic in documenting the impact of its activities in order to communicate to the IRCP, in a timely manner, the results achieved. Moreover, this more systematic collection of performance information will allow the IRCP to report more effectively.**

To this end, CRIC could consider a number of strategies.

- ▶ Gather the names of participants in its activities and send them a questionnaire (in the 30 days following the event) whose format and contents would essentially be similar to the one used to conduct this formative evaluation.
- ▶ Advertise the feedback process more directly: on CRIC Internet site, this process should be clearly indicated on each main page rather than only in the header.
- ▶ Require the persons or institutions that download CRIC documents to register, thus allowing to collect basic information on the users of CRIC products. The users' profile of CRIC products could be published on a regular basis.
- ▶ Survey the registered persons and institutions that have downloaded CRIC material by using an on-line survey, while observing the basic principles regarding privacy and allowing the users to remove their names from the list of persons and institutions that are contacted.
- ▶ Consult CRIC Governors annually, by means of a survey, to collect their opinion on CRIC's impact.



The contribution agreement between PCH and the CUC regarding funding for CRIC activities clearly states the need to acknowledge the federal government's financial contribution. However, our consultations and research confirm that this is very rarely done. Except for *The CRIC Papers*, on which this acknowledgement is displayed on the back of the documents, this acknowledgement is not made. Although the CUC is determined to be independent, we do not consider it appropriate to acknowledge all the sponsors of CRIC activities except for the support provided by the federal government. A simple reference to federal support, as prescribed in the memorandum of agreement between PCH and the CUC, would be appropriate.

**Recommendation 3. As stated in the memorandum of agreement, CRIC should acknowledge the federal government as one of its sponsors as it does the other sponsors that are identified in connection with its activities.**

This approach should not undermine CRIC's independence, which most respondents who were consulted judged as being essential to its effectiveness. This same challenge is apparently encountered by other single-recipient programs.

It should also be noted that an increase in funding from other sources (foundations or the private sector) to create self-sponsored activities would alleviate concerns regarding acknowledgement. There is no indication however that CRIC could achieve self-sponsored funding in the near future.

## **6.0 Management Response to the Formative Evaluation**

The department will continue to emphasize the effective dissemination of information about Canada and the nourishing of public policy discussion as a means of achieving IRCP objectives. Commissioned research by the CRIC is one source among many of the information that CRIC diffuses. The department regards the collaboration between CRIC and the Globe and Mail newspaper in the production of *The New Canada* as a welcome contribution to public understanding.

### **Management response to Recommendation #1**

The department is in complete agreement with this recommendation and will implement it in as timely a fashion as possible. We shall, however, provide more specific guidance to CUC through a covering letter on the next contribution agreement about the objectives and results, pending renewal of the program.

### **Action Plan**



- Discussion with CUC to identify issues by 31/01/2004
- Clarifications incorporated in 04/05 agreement by 01/04/2004

### **Management response to Recommendation #2**

The department agrees completely with this recommendation and will take immediate measures to respond.

#### **Action Plan**

- Initial discussion with CUC to identify data gaps by 31/12/2003
- Follow-up meeting to identify measures and timing by 31/01/2004
- Tracking requirements specified in 04/05 agreement by 01/04/2004
- Monitoring ongoing

### **Management response to Recommendation #3**

The department recognizes, as did the evaluators, that considerable progress has been made in the past months with respect to ensuring appropriate recognition of our support for CRIC. Nevertheless, we believe that CRIC could and should do better, as recommended here. We will continue to work with the organization to clarify expectations around recognition and to ensure compliance.

#### **Action Plan**

- Discussion of specific expectations by product/activity by 31/12/2003
- Drafting of product/activity protocols by 31/01/2004
- Implementation of protocols from 01/03/2004
- Monitoring ongoing



Canadian  
Heritage

Patrimoine  
canadien

Canada

**Appendix A**  
Consultation Instruments



## **Interview Guide for CUC/CRIC Officials**

The Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) established the Information and Research on Canada Program (IRCP) in August 2001 in order to further promote Canadian citizenship and to encourage all Canadians to connect in a meaningful way. The IRCP has one contribution agreement in place with the Canadian Unity Council (CUC), to fund the Centre for Research and Information on Canada (CRIC) at \$4,15 million per year.

PCH is proceeding with a formative evaluation of this initiative to assess the adequacy of the initiative design and delivery, and to assess the likelihood of objectives achievement. PCH has retained the services of an independent research company, Prairie Research Associates (PRA) Inc., to conduct this evaluation.

As part of this process, we hope to interview a number of stakeholders to deepen our understanding of this initiative.

All information you provide is strictly confidential. You will not be associated with any comments and all interviews will be reported only in aggregate form.

### **Introduction**

1. Please briefly describe your role and duties in your present position. How do they relate to the CUC and CRIC? How long have you been involved with the CUC and CRIC?

### **Context**

2. Before addressing the issues that are specific to CRIC, we will talk more broadly about the CUC. The CUC is self-described as an independent, non-profit, and non-partisan organization which aims at promoting a better understanding of Canada and its realities, its federation, and institutions as well as the regional, social, and cultural diversity among Canadians. Could you elaborate on this?

3. Based on your experience, what would you say have been the key social, economic, and political trends that have prompted the creation and subsequent growth of the CUC over the years? What do you expect for the future in this regard?

4. As an independent, non-profit, and non-partisan organization, could you please describe the funding sources of the CUC and, more specifically, CRIC?

### **Program design**

5. We will now turn specifically to CRIC. How would you describe CRIC in comparison to the CUC? Is CRIC comparable in any shape or form to any other similar organization in Canada?





6. Based on the CRIC 2003 report on activities to the Department of Canadian Heritage, there are several short-, medium-, and long-term objectives in relation to CRIC. How relevant do you think each of those objectives are?

*Note: The objectives of CRIC are the following:*

*Short-term objectives*

- a. Reach new audiences through continuous and greater production of information instruments.*
- b. Diversify the research projects of CRIC and develop its research capacity.*

*Medium-term objectives*

- a. Ensure the visibility of CRIC and develop an effective network in all regions of the country.*
- b. Elaborate initiatives allowing to create self-sponsored projects.*

*Long-term objectives*

- a. More Canadians connected to one another, sharing their stories and information and learning more about Canada's place in the world.*
- b. A greater awareness by Canadians of the issues pertaining to the principles and functioning of the Canadian federation and its institutions, and an encouragement of a constructive dialogue among Canadians.*
- c. A greater awareness by Canadians of emerging issues of concern to Canadians, such as globalization, the widening gap between rural and urban realities, the decline of voter participation in the election process and the impact of such issues on Canadian identity.*

7. To what extent are CRIC activities meeting these objectives? Do you feel that these activities tend to apply to some objectives more than others?

8. Are there any obstacles that impede CRIC's ability to meet its objectives? Please explain.

9. What would you say are the main strengths of CRIC? What are its main weaknesses?

10. How would you describe the clientele targeted by CUC/CRIC initiatives? Does the CUC/CRIC focus on any specific groups within the Canadian society (minority language, culturally diverse, rural communities, youth, Aboriginal groups, etc.)? What more can be done to reach them?

11. How would you describe the division of responsibilities within the CUC/CRIC in the following:

- ▶ the design of CRIC activities?
- ▶ the activity selection process?
- ▶ the implementation of those activities?
- ▶ the financial resources devoted to those activities? (How CRIC activities are funded and who decides on how much will be spent on a specific activity?)
- ▶ the tracking and reporting on the initiated activities?
- ▶ the evaluation of the activities?



Could you provide us with a recent example of a CRIC activity that followed such division of responsibilities?

12. The CUC, under its CRIC program, maintains regional offices (otherwise known as CRIC offices) in Quebec City, Toronto, Calgary, Vancouver, and Ottawa. How would you describe the roles and responsibilities of these CRIC offices? How do they interact with the CUC/CRIC main office in Montreal? Do they tend to create duplication?

13. How would you describe the relationship between the CUC/CRIC and the Information and Research on Canada Program (IRCP) in the Department of Canadian Heritage? Is this relationship appropriate?

### **Program activities**

14. What are the key activities, publications, and initiatives of CRIC? How do these activities interact with each others? Are they complementary or do they tend to create duplication? Are there gaps? Please explain.

15. Are third party organizations involved in delivering CRIC activities? If so, how would you describe such involvement? Are there ways to improve such involvement?

### **Success**

16. Based on your experience, what are the challenges in implementing CRIC activities? What do you believe tend to be the most successful types of activities? Please explain?

17. In looking at the impact of CRIC initiatives, could you identify who benefits from such initiatives and activities? Who does not benefit from CRIC initiatives? What evidence exists to support such conclusions?

18. At this point, what would you consider to be the main achievements of CRIC? Please elaborate. Is there any indication that CRIC may be having unintended effects, positive or negative? If yes, what are these effects?

19. What lessons have been learned thus far that would help ensure the continued successful delivery of CRIC activities? Please explain.

### **Reporting**

20. What is your opinion concerning the reporting and accountability process in relation to CUC/CRIC spending and activities? In relation to your own functions within the CUC/CRIC,



what information or data do you feel is useful? How do you use it? Is there additional information not currently gathered that should be? How would you use this information?

21. To what extent does the CRIC report to the IRCP on outputs and results achieved? Is this type of performance-related information collected systematically? What problems, if any, exist in collecting this type of information? Please explain. What steps have been taken to rectify the situation?

22. Thinking about the CUC and CRIC activities you have been involved with, what indicators are most appropriate to measure progress toward results on an ongoing basis? To what extent is this information being collected? What still needs to be done to ensure this information will be available for a summative evaluation in the next two years?

### **Conclusion**

23. Do you have any other comments on anything we have not addressed during the interview?

*Thank you for your collaboration*



## Interview Guide for PCH Officials

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PCH is proceeding with a formative evaluation of this initiative to assess the adequacy of the initiative design and delivery, and to assess the likelihood of objectives achievement. PCH has retained the services of an independent research company, Prairie Research Associates (PRA) Inc., to conduct this evaluation.

As part of this process, we hope to interview a number of stakeholders to deepen our understanding of this initiative.

All information you provide is strictly confidential. You will not be associated with any comments and all interviews will be reported only in aggregate form.

### **Introduction**

1. Please briefly describe your role and duties in your present position, and how they relate to the IRCP. How long have you been involved with the IRCP?

### **Context**

2. To the best of your re-collection, could you describe the history, context, and reasons that led to the creation of the IRCP in 2001?

3. Could you describe the IRCP organization, its mandate, and third party contribution agreement(s) it has in place?

4. A contribution agreement for the IRCP was signed between PCH and the Treasury Board in October 2001, retroactive to April 1, 2001. This contribution agreement officially covered the fiscal years 2001-2002 and 2002-2003. What is the actual status of the contribution agreement and how is the IRCP presently funded?



## Program design

5. We will now turn specifically to the IRCP and CRIC. How would you describe the purpose of the IRCP in comparison to CRIC? What are the main reasons for the IRCP to support the CUC and to cover the costs incurred by CRIC? Why is such support not provided to any other similar organizations?

6. Based on the IRCP Terms and Conditions, the objectives of the IRCP are to provide Canadians with the relevant and timely research and information required to foster a greater understanding and awareness of the richness and depth of the key components which make up Canadians' unique identity: Canada's society, people, and culture. This is done by making accessible to all Canadians information and research on Canada's cultural diversity, linguistic duality and shared values in order to help Canadians connect to each other and the world. Could you elaborate on this?

7. To what extent are IRCP initiatives meeting these objectives? Do you feel that those activities tend to apply to some objectives more than others?

8. Are there any obstacles that impede the IRCP's ability to meet its objectives? Please explain.

9. What would you say are the main strengths of the IRCP? What are its main weaknesses?

10. Does the IRCP focus on any specific groups within the Canadian society (minority language, culturally diverse, rural communities, youth, Aboriginal groups, etc.)? What more can be done to reach them?

11. How would you describe the relationship between the CUC/CRIC and the IRCP in the Department of Canadian Heritage? Is this relationship appropriate?

12. How would you describe the division of responsibilities within the IRCP and the CUC/CRIC in the following:

- ▶ the design of CRIC activities?
- ▶ the activity selection process?
- ▶ the implementation of those activities?
- ▶ the financial resources devoted to those activities? (How CRIC activities are funded and who decides on how much will be spent on a specific activity?)
- ▶ the tracking and reporting on the initiated activities?
- ▶ the evaluation of the activities?



13. Section 7 of the approved program Terms and Conditions indicates that the “recipient will be asked to provide an annual business plan to the Department clearly identifying and describing specific activities and initiatives including expected time-lines, reasonable estimates of the costs associated with each activity as well as the sources of funding, including financial support from the Department.”

- ▶ How would you describe the ability of PCH to determine if CRIC funding is used for the purposes agreed?
- ▶ How are eligible CRIC activities identified by PCH?

### **Program activities**

14. What are the key activities, publications and initiatives of the IRCP? How do IRCP-funded initiatives interact with other CRIC activities? Are they complementary or do they tend to create duplication? Are there gaps? Please explain.

15. Based on your experience, are third party organizations involved in delivering CRIC activities? If so, how would you describe such involvement? Are there ways to improve such involvement?

16. The approved Terms and Conditions (Section 16) of the program require that the “recipient must agree to recognize the financial support by the federal government in all public announcements.” A review of the CUC and CRIC’s public announcements found that there was not always a recognition of the financial support received from PCH. Could you elaborate on this?

### **Success**

17. What are the challenges in implementing the IRCP objectives? What do you believe tend to be the most successful types of initiatives in order to reach the IRCP objectives? Please explain.

18. In looking at the impact of CRIC initiatives, could you identify who benefits from such initiatives and activities? Who does not benefit from CRIC initiatives? What evidence exists to support such conclusions?

19. At this point, what do you consider to be the main achievements of the IRCP? Please elaborate. Is there any indication that the program may be having unintended effects, positive or negative? If yes, what are these effects?

20. What lessons have been learned thus far that would help ensure the continued successful delivery of the IRCP and CRIC activities? Please explain.



## **Reporting**

21. What is your opinion concerning the reporting and accountability process in relation to CUC/CRIC spending and activities? In relation to your own functions within PCH and your responsibilities in relation to the IRCP, what information or data do you feel is useful? How do you use it? Is there additional information not currently gathered that should be? How would you use this information?

22. To what extent does the CRIC report to the IRCP on outputs and results achieved? Is this type of performance-related information collected systematically? What problems, if any, exist in collecting this type of information? Please explain. What steps have been taken to rectify the situation?

23. Thinking about the CUC and CRIC activities, what indicators are most appropriate to measure progress toward results on an ongoing basis? To what extent is this information being collected and provided to PCH? What still needs to be done to ensure this information will be available for a summative evaluation in the next two years?

## **Conclusion**

24. Do you have any other comments on anything we have not addressed during the interview?

*Thank you for your collaboration*